

Concept/Guidelines for Reorganized FIR SIG

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Until the present, the NASA Far Infrared Science Interest Group (FIR SIG) has been co-chaired by Paul Goldsmith (JPL) and David Leisawitz (GSFC). While this has moved things forward, it is time to consider an alternative structure. The goal of the reorganization is to encourage broader participation on the part of the science community. While the FIR SIG is open to any interested individual, we need people who are willing to make serious commitment in order, for example, to put together future community workshops, assemble the reports from these, and to continue such activities.

Discussions between the current co-chairs, the Cosmic Origins Program Analysis Group (COPAG) Executive Committee, and NASA Headquarters have resulted in the following “draft guidelines”, which we hope will be discussed by the membership of the FIR SIG. The SIGs are largely self-governing bodies, but it is important to have some reasonably well-defined guidelines, to make it clear how individuals can get involved. The FIR SIG will have an “executive committee”, consisting of individuals who are interested and are willing to make a commitment of time and effort. Based on experience of the FIR SIG (as well as other SIGs) we do feel that the idea of co-chairs of the executive committee is a good one, as it divides the work, and covers for travel on the part of any single chair. We also feel it would be ideal for the terms of committee members to be staggered, as well as of the co-chairs, to ensure transmission of critical information and “wisdom”.

The FIR SIG is open to all members of the scientific community with an interest in far-infrared astronomy, and in particular who are interested in NASA’s activities in this area.

The FIR SIG will have a Science and Technology Organizing Committee (STOC) which will consist of members of the SIG who are self-nominated or nominated by other SIG members in response to a call for new members. The STOC will nominally have 9 members. Membership on the STOC will be for a period of 3 years. Memberships will be staggered so that 1/3 of membership rolls over each year.

There will be a transition from the present system (two co-chairs, no STOC) to the new system, in which Goldsmith and Leisawitz will serve as members of the STOC with 1-year terms, 1 additional person will be selected for a 1-year term, 3 individuals for 2-year terms, and 3 individuals for 3-year terms. The new co-chairs will be selected from the STOC and by the STOC, with method TBD.